

# U.S. Coast Guard Academy Class of '53 Newsletter

February 2004

*About this Newsletter: The Class of '53 Newsletter is published "whenever we get around to it." Its purpose is to keep members of our class informed about our classmates' lives and activities and to provide some tid-bits of trivia and information.*

*Because not all our classmates are members of the Alumni Association, and not all of our classmates have e-mail, and the deadline for articles for our class notes section in The Bulletin is almost two months before it's published, there will be duplications and gaps in what is included here, what is sent by e-mail or "snail mail", and what appears in The Bulletin.*

*Send items for The Bulletin and this Newsletter to: Wee Smith, 19 Coachman Pike, Ledyard, CT 06339 -- Tel/FAX 860-464-8425 or e-mail to jdsbridge@aol.com.*

## Class "Micro Reunion" in Spain in September, 2004

As of February 14th, these 23 classmates returned postcards indicating that they *might* be interested in attending a '53 "Micro-reunion" in Bossost Val D'Aran, Spain this September: Roger Bascom, Bob Benson, Bill Bruinsma, Ed Cope, Rick Cueroni, Ed Daniels, Hank Fisher, Kirk Greiner, Ralph Hill, Jimmy Hiteshew, Roger Holmes, Bill King, Bill Kohl, Bill Lehr, Gerry Lipsett, Bob Lynch, Roger Mowell, Ed Nelson, Bob Schmidt, Keith Schumacher, Ted Smith, Wee Smith, and Gene Trainor. These classmates indicated that it's *doubtful* that they would be interested in attending this micro-reunion, but they did not say they wouldn't attend: Bill Clark, George Everett, Bob Iden, Graeme Mann, Jim Shelton, Wade Smith, and Fred Sponholz.

The reunion will probably be held during the second half of September 2004. In June, Jane and I are going to meet **Bud Grader** and his lady-friend, **Rita Mehos** in Val D'Aran to pin down the specifics for it, (e.g., dates, costs, planned itineraries, etc.). As soon as we get back, we'll send the details to all those who have indicated a possible interest in attending.

## Classmates in the News

The February issue of the *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* had a nice article on **Dan Colussy's** satellite communication company *Iridium*.

The February 11th issue of the *Wall Street Journal* had an article about the travails that **Bud Grader** experienced on his way home from Afghanistan at Christmas time. Copies of both of these articles are attached.

## Golden Tide Rips "Afterword"

Gerry Lipsett is putting together an "Afterword" addendum for our '53 Golden Tide Rips which will include photos and highlights of our 50th

Reunion. We plan to distribute it by the end of February.

## Video of Cadet Days "Then and Now"

**Bob Lynch** did a great job of putting the collection of movies and videos of cadet days then and now on one VHS tape. That's the "good news". The "bad news" is that he has distributed all of the copies that he made.

If you did not get a copy, but would still like one, please let me know and we'll look into the costs of getting additional copies reproduced commercially.

## What to do with your old '53 photos?

As **Dan Briganti** was moseying through his old photos of classmates from Academy days he thought, "My kids aren't going to know who these folks are. Why not pass them on to the classmates? - they and their kids would enjoy them a whole lot more."

That's a great idea! -- others might want to do the same with theirs.

## 25% of '04 Grads Will Not Go to Sea

The following are excerpts from articles that appeared in the New London *DAY* recently.

As automation on CG ships allows for minimal crew sizes and the number of ships comes down, there will be fewer junior officer billets available for first-tour Academy graduates.

The Commandant, Admiral Tom Collins '68 spoke to the Corps and assured them that shore assignments, particularly at a Group or Marine Safety Office, will expose them to a much broader slice of the service and prepare them for a career at least as well as a few years on a cutter.

"There's not just one magic career track -- there's a whole host of opportunities for you to pursue," Collins said. What will make a difference to an ensign's prospects, he said, is how well he or she performs and contributes to the organization in that first job.

"Obviously, our preference is having you go to sea, but you're not going to lose any opportunity if you don't," Collins said. "It will have no negative impact."

"Whatever your ensign assignment turns out to be, I can assure you your leadership talents will be needed like never before, they will be tested like never before," Collins said. "You will have the opportunity to help us continue a tradition of leadership ... when our nation needs our service the most."

Some graduates may also go directly to flight training.

In the 128-year history all Academy graduates have always gone to sea for their first tour of duty.

## USAA Insurance

USAA has some of the lowest insurance rates available and former cadets *may* be eligible for it. If you don't already have your insurance with USAA, you may want to call them at (1-800-531-8111) to find out if you're eligible. When I asked USAA what

Kirk - Best to you and Jackie!!  
Wee

the general eligibility requirements are, they said that all applications are handled on a "case by case" basis.

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**"Misc. Bits and Pieces"**

*Some News about our classmates and friends  
(Listed in alphabetical order)*

**Dan Briganti** had what he thought was a minor scrape of his ankle bone last summer as he was going in the Bay rowing. He didn't think anything of it, but it apparently broke the skin and became infected. A long bout of antibiotics, tests, doc visits, finally led to the infectious disease doc, who discovered it was a wierd and stubborn waterborne microorganism. The best anti-B will take about four more months to get rid of the little @#%^&\*!!! Other than that he said he feels fine, it's only a mild pain but a nuisance.

**Bill and Romy Bruinsma's** new e-mail address is [4the2bears@cox.net](mailto:4the2bears@cox.net).

**Bill and Ann Clark** have a new e-mail address: [clarkwmb@msn.com](mailto:clarkwmb@msn.com). Their grandson, Denny Clark, recently graduated from Navy boot camp where he stood number 1 in his class. He is stationed on the NIMITZ in San Diego and is waiting to go to Class A training in an aviation specialty.

**Rick and Beth Cueroni's** address after February 20th will be: 5305 Fleet Landing Blvd., Atlantic Beach, FL 32233, Tel: 904-249-4970. Their new e-mail address will be: [cue53@bellsouth.net](mailto:cue53@bellsouth.net). Beth's eyesight continues to be greatly reduced. Since it's caused by a neuropathy of her optic nerve, glasses will not help improve her condition. In spite of all of hers and their family's health problems, Beth's spirits and courage are indomitable.

**Ed and Becky Daniels** had almost their entire family with them for Christmas. Earlier this month, Ed and Becky attended her mother's 91st birthday.

**Wendell and Yvonne Driggers** will be taking a two-week trip to China in mid-March and a Western Caribbean cruise in July.

**Russ Eastwood's** wife, **Joyce**, is recovering from a fall on their front walk in she cracked three ribs and had a partial lung collapse.

**Jim Grabb's** new e-mail address: [Jimgrabb@verizon.net](mailto:Jimgrabb@verizon.net).

**Bud Grader's** said the attached WSJ article on his "stay" in New Delhi was "Basically accurate except for the '40 years in the State Department' - I retired with 24 years, which I believe included my Coast Guard time. And they should have mentioned the Academy as a preparatory phase for dealing with prison!"

**Ralph and Diane Hill's** e-mail address is [2hillsensei@charter.net](mailto:2hillsensei@charter.net).

**Clay and Jan Hughes** are wintering in Tucson, Arizona. While there, their e-mail address is [Janclay11@aol.com](mailto:Janclay11@aol.com).

After living in No. Haledon, NJ for 38 years, **Rin and Bert Keyzer** are building a house near Harrisburg, PA and will be moving there in August.

**Bill Kohl** advised that his correct e-mail address is [wkohl53@hotmail.com](mailto:wkohl53@hotmail.com) and that "I really like my '50 Plus medallion', but it gets in the way on my back-swing. Hopefully, I'll have it worked out by the Jay Flanagan - Wee Smith Men's Invitational

Golf Tournament in May". He also said that he really liked this quote from the Class of '83's Walk-On script: "You're only young once, but you can be immature forever".

**"Steamboat" Lewis**, while leaving his daughter's home in November, tripped and broke his femur where it joins the hip. In repairing the break, his doctor had to cut through some of the muscle in his leg which hinders his ability to lift his leg. He's walking with a cane but he and Adele have not been able to get to the Mohegan Sun Casino or Atlantic City. "Steamboat" is afraid that without his and Adele's "participation", the casinos may go bankrupt.

**Bob and Iris Lynch's** "Aunt Edith" who attended the Reno/Lake Tahoe mini-reunion in 2002 with them is undergoing radiation treatments for kidney cancer. She will be 89 in June. After the reunion she said to Bob, "I never had met Admirals and Captains before. What a wonderful group of men and their wives!" Her address is Mrs. Edith Ratcliff, 6608 E. Sheridan St., Scottsdale, AZ 85257.

**Ed and Joyce Nelson** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on February 6th in Astoria, OR. **Dick and Janie Donnelly, Kirk and Jackie Greiner, and Ralph and Diane Hill** were among the guests who attended the event. Back on January 5th Ed had a pacemaker installed. He described the sequence of events this way: "On January 3rd, I was sitting in an easy chair when I experienced a strange feeling that I can't adequately describe as dizziness, but I was disoriented and felt weak. I dropped the book I was reading and was not really aware that I had done so. I got up to go into the bedroom and fell down, but did not lose consciousness. I knew I was down, but couldn't figure out what was happening. I got to the bed with Joyce's help and lay down. I took my blood pressure and found it to be 122 over 68 with a pulse rate of 48. I knew that wasn't right. Joyce drove me to the ER where they tried to get the numbers higher. Then they took me by ambulance to St. Vincent's in Portland. I got there in the middle of the night, probably about 0230 or 0300. I actually didn't feel bad because they had stabilized me a bit, but the cardiologist explained that a pacemaker would be needed to provide the stimulation that my heart was not receiving. That procedure was relatively painless, certainly not as annoying as the electrical stimulation that they tried at the local ER."

**Bill and Mickey Reilly's** telephone number is 860-739-8973. Their e-mail address is [bmcreeilly@msn.com](mailto:bmcreeilly@msn.com).

Following our 50th Reunion, **Ernie and Nina Rowland** took a circuitous route back to Cowichan Bay, British Columbia, Canada. They made some stops to see their children, some relatives, **Bill and Margie Russell** in Woodbridge, VA, and **Rick and Beth Cueroni** in Canton, GA. Ernie and Nina made it back to their home in Canada in mid-January, but not without some unplanned "excitement". While driving through Junction, TX, they managed to "total" their car and after renting a couple of cars, they bought a new car in Phoenix, AZ. No one was hurt in the accident, but Ernie humorously said he'll "probably giving USAA more money next year, and

someone will probably say that those over 75 shouldn't be driving". Ernie and Nina also proudly report that their neighboring town in Duncan, Canada has the largest hockey stick and hockey puck in the world!

He doesn't look it, he doesn't act it, and it's hard to believe it, but **CAPT Stan Smith**, USMA '37 who taught us math and mechanics when we were cadets celebrated his 90th birthday on December 8th, 2003. On August 17th this year, Captain Smith and his lovely wife and best friend, **Louise**, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary.

**Ted Smith** described his experience at our 50th Reunion this way:

- Class of '53 50th reunion fee - \$390
- Gasoline and other expenses to and from New London, CT - \$102.15
- Three nights at Flagship Inn, Groton, CT - \$336
- Playing Taps at '53 memorial service - emotional
- Receiving 50 Plus medallion from USCG Commandant - *unbelievable!*
- Leading pre-football game reunion class walk-on playing "The Saints Go Marching In" - *impossible!*
- Congratulations from Adm. Collins' wife and RADM Olsen - *gratifying.*
- Playing tribute to "brothers" at class dinner - *cementing '53 legacy.*
- Being on the cover of the Alumni Association Directory issue - *priceless!!!*

### "Chinamen Never Eat Chili"

Those who attended our 25th reunion may recall **M.C. Rick Cueroni** and **Ted Smith** leading us in singing a variety of verses to the tune "*Chinamen Never Eat Chili*". The chorus is:

Aye, Aye, Aye, Aye-Aye  
Chinamen never eat chili.  
So here comes a verse, that's worse than the first  
So waltz me around Willie.

Well, **Ted** has sent the following new verses which we might want to use at a future class reunion.

A funny cadet we called Artie  
Was often the life of the party.  
But he steered in the way of a sub one spring day  
50 demerits for you, Mister Smartie!

We sailed on a ship with an Eagle  
Under the bowsprit -- how regal!  
To pull up the chain: 'round again and again  
Which seemed to us pretty mid-evil!

A bugler then known as Smitty  
Came from our Capitol City.  
We could tell when he'd play each call of the day  
Now it's no longer live -- what a pity!

Our room mates were then known as "wives"  
And they often helped us to survive.  
The ones we have now are much more than a pal  
And we'll have them the rest of our lives.

In two thousand and three we marked fifty  
And returned to the old Aca-demy.  
We marched on in fine dress, playing music, no less,  
And the honors were fitting and nifty!

Fifty-Three is well known, far and wide,  
As a class with unusual pride.  
Even those who departed kept the standards imparted  
And gave life a bloody good ride!

Our class had no shortage of rank,  
An no one had a ship that he sank.  
Whether military, CEO, PhD,  
Take the quality straight to the bank!

To everyone who sends me a new verse, I'll  
send a Class of '53 tie-tack pin!

### Editor's personal notes:

• **Jane**, received the 2003 Larry Weiss trophy presented annually "to the New England bridge player who exhibits superior behavior and gracious presence at the bridge table while achieving success in the year's events". At the presentation, she was honored with these words, "Jane is a most delightful partner ... her name is frequently found among the overall leaders at sectional and regional tournaments. Her attitude toward partners and opponents alike is always gracious". Jane was the 12th recipient of this award and only the second from Conn. She has over 3,900 American Contract Bridge League master points.

• Instead of going to Australia and New Zealand with the Class of '53's most generous gift to us, Jane and I are planning to make a driving trip through Northern England and Scotland probably in July. When **Bill Bruinsma** heard we were thinking of going to Britain, he sent us a British Automobile Association *Illustrated Guide to Britain* which he had from when he lived in England. It will be invaluable both in planning and executing our trip.

### The 5 Secrets of a Perfect Relationship

**Ed Nelson** (who, with **Joyce**, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on February 6th), sent this advice:

1. It's important to have a woman who helps at home, who cooks from time to time, cleans up and has a job.
2. It's important to have a woman who can make you laugh.
3. It's important to have a woman who you can trust and who doesn't lie to you.
4. It's important to have a woman who is good in bed and who likes to be with you.
5. It's very, very important that these four women don't know each other.

*It would be interesting to know Joyce's interpretation of this and her advice.*

"Measure your wealth by the state of your health, the love of your family, and the number of good friends" - Life's Little Instruction Calendar - Friday, February 13, 2004

privately deployed close to the battlefield, provided with adequate communications, and supported with adequate CasEvac, medevac, and en route care assets—can be highly effective in saving life and limb. Regular and reserve medical components must adjust their organizations and training to take advantage of the lessons learned.

Marine commanders must be more attentive to medical readiness and support issues, and incorporate realistic medical training—including patient evacuation—into exercises. Only those measures will ensure that skilled medical personnel will be ready to respond when naval forces are required to operate from over the horizon and far from the sea.

<sup>1</sup>R. Zajtchuk and G. R. Sullivan. "Battlefield Trauma Care: Focus on Advanced Technology," *Military Medicine*, January 1995, pp. 1-7.

<sup>2</sup>T. R. Bilski, B. C. Baker, J. R. Grove, R. P. Hinks, M. J. Harrison, J. P. Sabra, S. M. Temerlin, and P. Rhee. "Battlefield Casualties Treated at Camp Rhino, Afghanistan: Lessons Learned," *Journal of Trauma*, February 2003, pp. 814-822.

<sup>3</sup>R. F. Bellamy. "The Causes of Death in Conventional Land Warfare: Implications for Combat Casualty Care Research," *Military Medicine*, February 1984, pp. 55-62.

<sup>4</sup>Operational Requirements Document for the Forward Resuscitative Surgery System (Quantico, Virginia: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, January 2000).

<sup>5</sup>R. L. Mabry, J. B. Holcomb, A. M. Baker, C. C. Cloonan, J. M. Uhorchak, D. E. Perkins, A. J. Canfield, and J. H. Hagmann. "United States Army Rangers in Somalia: An Analysis of Combat Casualties on an Urban Battlefield," *Journal of Trauma*, September 2000, pp. 515-29.

<sup>6</sup>F. K. Butler, J. Hayman, and E. G. Butler. "Tactical

Combat Casualty Care in Special Operations," *Military Medicine*, August 1996 (supplement), pp. 3-16.

<sup>7</sup>R. S. Smith, H. R. Bohman, D. J. Morabito, and F. E. Ludwig. "Trauma Experience of Navy Surgeons. Assessment and Commentary," *Military Medicine*, August 1996, pp. 435-58; R. H. Koehler and R. S. Smith. "Tragedy of American Combat Casualties: The Need for Change," *Military Medicine*, August 1994, pp. 541-7.

Captain Bohman is Chief of Professional Services, 1st Medical Battalion, 1st Force Service Support Group (FSSG), and a general surgeon on the staff of the Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, California. Captain Baker is an anesthesiologist at 1st Medical Battalion and works on the staff of the hospital. Captain Stevens is Commanding Officer of the 4th Medical Battalion, 4th FSSG, Marine Forces Reserve. Captain Bohman organized and trained the FRSS teams for Operation Iraqi Freedom; his coauthors served there as well.

## Iridium Satellite Communications Are the Wave of the Future

Rear Admiral Hugh D. Wisely, U.S. Navy (Retired)

Not long ago, before Enron's fall from grace, a satellite communications (SatCom) venture called Iridium was one of the most highly publicized bankruptcies in the United States. There were stories of satellites falling from the sky, meltdown of the company's entire satellite constellation as it spiraled into the economic abyss, and thousands of useless satellite phones out in the marketplace. Well, to paraphrase the old saying, stories of Iridium's demise were greatly exaggerated.

In fact, Iridium LLC went bankrupt in 1999, but not because of technological failures. It was mostly a victim of declines in the communications industry and bad market timing. The technology of the system was—and remains—an incredible scientific achievement. When the old Iridium launched its services, the cell phone industry had grown larger and faster than anyone expected, and the market was flooded. The company's huge developmental expenditure (nearly \$6 billion) forced it to go after a large wireless mass market to regain its investment.

A group of private investors led by Dan Colussy, the former head of Pan American Airlines, saw the opportunity and bought the company out of bankrupt-

cy for a mere \$25 million. At the same time, the new owners secured a two-year, \$72-million contract with the Department of Defense (DoD). To the contrary of all rumors, the new Iridium has made significant growth in the commercial and military sectors. Its satellite constellation—now operated under a contract with Boeing Company—has undergone technology upgrades that have extended its life to 2014 and possibly beyond.

There are 66 operational satellites in the constellation, with 13 in-orbit spares, including 7 spares launched in 2002. These spares will help the constellation maintain operational health and longevity. At its own expense, Iridium plans to develop and determine requirements for the company to implement the next series of satellites to continue to grow and provide services after 2014. Although, the term is bandied about far too loosely, the system's interoperable handheld devices truly are *transformational*. They provide communications functions ranging from special operations forces (SOFs), to conventional ground, sea, and air forces, to logistics, to morale calls. It can be voice, or tied to a personal data assistant (PDA) or laptop computer for data transfer, and video tests are under way.

### Iridium in Afghanistan

Iridium handheld satellite telephones with secure-voice sleeves proved operationally invaluable to the various SOFs that conducted diverse operations in the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Army special operations officers noted that the Defense Information Systems Agency worked closely with the SOFs to outfit and manage Iridium assets throughout OEF.

The U.S. liaison teams carried Iridium units during all operations with the Northern Alliance. The rugged terrain and wide dispersal of SOF teams accelerated the importance of satellite communication systems.

The Air Force Special Operations Command's communications team was key to U.S. Special Operations Command's strategic communications during OEF. Their innovative approach to assembling small, easily transportable communications packages set the standard—and the Iridium initial communications element was a clear winner. The system gave SOFs an early-entry, lightweight, multichannel SatCom system and terminal equipment for initial communi-

# U.S. Security Moves Spur Testiness

## Foreign Authorities Appear To Respond in Retaliation; American Is Jailed in India

Seventy-two-year-old Charles Grader knows how to travel the world—he spent 40 years with the State Department. Yet he ended up in a New Delhi prison cell for a week with 66 other men.

Be warned. Dr. Grader's troubles may have been completely random, but maybe not. The second generation of travel security is upon us, and already it's adding tension to international flying. Just as we've grown accustomed to baring our soles at security checkpoints and toting our bags to the bomb-scanners, we'll now have to get used to new, more invasive security precautions. Yet there are going to be pains and adjustments.

With the U.S. now fingerprinting and photographing visitors from many nations and detaining and deporting more folks with visa issues, on top of sudden flight cancellations due to security threats, authorities in other nations may be getting all the more testy.

As a result, U.S. travelers could feel the brunt of foreign officials who are less than enthralled with American actions of late.

One obvious sign came last month when Brazilian authorities, who now photograph and fingerprint visiting Americans in retaliation for new U.S. practices, didn't take kindly to an American Airlines crew that fussed. When the captain held up his middle finger for the camera, he was jailed and fined \$12,750. (He claimed it was an unintentional result of holding a card up awkwardly.)

Then there's the far more unsettling case of Dr. Grader, a former diplomat and U.N. observer who has taught at MIT's Sloan School of Management and worked around the world with humanitar-

ian organizations. His troubles may have had nothing to do with travel tensions—or everything to do with what's gone on recently. At least, it's a warning for others to be careful.

Dr. Grader came out of retirement to head a major agricultural and irrigation development program in Afghanistan for Chemomics International Inc., a Washington-based consulting firm. In Afghanistan, he bought several thousand dollars worth of antique pistols and muskets to

from the U.S. Embassy in Delhi work to free him. It took a week, during which Dr. Grader says fellow prisoners "treated me as an older man with a lot of respect." Then he was released to house arrest at a hotel. After three more weeks and paying lawyers close to \$10,000, charges were dropped and he was allowed to leave the country—without the muskets.

The State Department does warn travelers that India recently began requiring

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The second generation of travel security is upon us, and already it's adding tension to international flying. American measures of late have irked foreign authorities.

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bring back to the U.S. as gifts, and secured the proper paperwork from Afghan authorities certifying that they weren't some sort of looted museum treasure.

From Afghanistan, Dr. Grader flew to New Delhi on **Ariana Afghan Airlines** to catch a **Lufthansa** flight to Frankfurt, and then on to Boston. Code-sharing from Afghanistan isn't exactly seamless—it's nonexistent. So Dr. Grader was instructed by Indian authorities to claim his baggage and go through security.

When the muskets went through the X-ray machine, trouble started. Dr. Grader unwrapped the 150-year-old guns and offered his paperwork. Indian authorities accused him of trying to smuggle guns into the country. He was eventually taken to a police station at 2:30 a.m., and then transferred to Delhi's notoriously overcrowded Tihar Prisons. Dr. Grader's cell, shared by accused murders, smugglers and others, had a single bathroom that was little more than a hole in the ground.

Charge d'Affaires Robert O. Blake

registration of antique items with the local police along with a photograph of the item. In fact, a November consular information sheet states that Indian customs authorities "enforce strict regulations concerning things like firearms, antiquities, currency and various other goods."

Still, it can be disconcerting to travelers to think that even someone with membership in the embassy fraternity could wind up in a nasty spot overseas. The State Department says it hasn't detected any increase in detainment of Americans aboard. Incidents like Dr. Grader's could happen from time to time, but there hasn't been any evidence of any sort of retaliation against Americans because of recent war or policy changes.

An official at the Indian Embassy in Washington says heightened security concerns likely brought more attention to Dr. Grader and the guns.

Dr. Grader wondered if he was the victim of some sort of anti-U.S. sentiment, or whether he was singled out for harsh treatment because he had spent lots of time in Pakistan, India's adversary. But in the end, he believes it was corruption. Several times, officials suggested to him he could buy his way out of trouble, he says, and offers this advice: "Business travelers beware."

The Indian government official in Washington said Dr. Grader's assumption was "implausible as well as improbable." Customs and immigration officials are closely supervised at the airport, he said.



**Journal Link:** Have a question for Scott about air travel or the airline industry? Write to him at [middleseat@wsj.com](mailto:middleseat@wsj.com). WSJ.com subscribers can read answers to selected questions in *Middle Seat Mailbox*, Tuesdays at [WSJ.com/JournalLinks](http://WSJ.com/JournalLinks).